

# TIP Programming

## How Projects are Evaluated and Selected for the TIP

Determining which projects to recommend for the Transportation Improvement Program begins with MCDOT's annual review of the county's transportation needs and roadway conditions. This is done through several methods. One of the most important tools used by MCDOT is the annual Transportation Management Systems Report. This report is divided into four sections that identify:

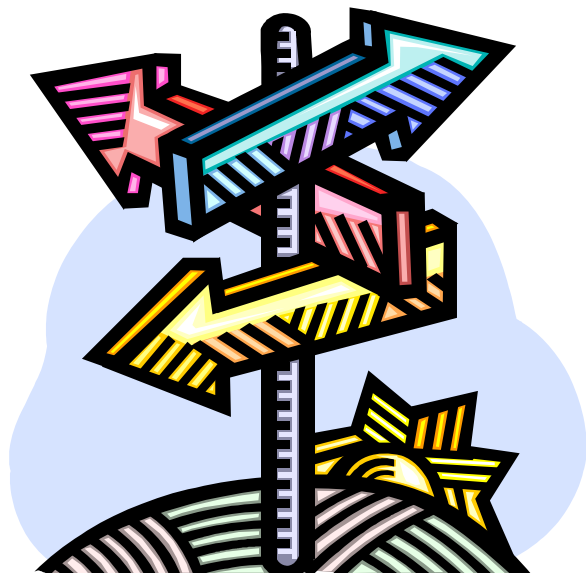
- Current and projected future traffic congestion on County roads.
- The type, history, location and severity of all traffic accidents occurring on County roadways.
- The historic and current physical condition of all MCDOT's roadways.
- The historic and current physical conditions on all MCDOT bridges and culverts.

In addition to the internal MCDOT transportation system analysis, annual meetings are held with many cities and towns to discuss mutual transportation needs and potential joint projects. Projects identified through these meetings and processes are reviewed and evaluated along with project requests from other non-governmental agencies and the general public. Projects already included in the MCDOT TIP from previous years are given priority to continue through the process to their eventual construction, assuming that no unusual circumstances arise.

These TIP changes usually result from decreased funding availability, environmental concerns, difficulty in

securing a financial partner, or other unforeseen problems. MCDOT staff annually reviews each internal and externally requested project. All projects are evaluated using the MCDOT objective rating system recommended by the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB).

The county also considers projects requested by cities and towns that have already completed Candidate Assessment Reports (CARs), Design Concept Reports (DCRs) or fully designed projects. A CAR is a planning level study that identifies the best possible alternatives to an identified transportation problem. It provides a scope, schedule and budget for solving the identified problem. A DCR is a preliminary engineering study that provides considerably more detail than a CAR, regarding the best technical project alternatives, proposed costs and a workable schedule. These completed studies are also ranked and considered for the TIP. Staff then matches available County funding with all ranked and recommended projects.



# TIP Programming (continued)

## Internal Project Review

The appropriate MCDOT staff reviews the ranked project requests, CARs, DCRs design, and construction projects and then recommends qualified projects to the MCDOT Management Team. This group is composed of the heads of various MCDOT divisions: Engineering, Planning, Right-of-Way, Project Management and Construction, Operations and Professional Services, as well as other key individuals.

The MCDOT Management Team usually recommends the highest ranked projects that are also ready to proceed to the Transportation Advisory Board for their study or a recommendation to the BOS for funding in the TIP. The TAB typically holds a working session to discuss the submitted projects as well as several subsequent public meetings to finalize a list of recommended projects to the Board of Supervisors.

## Determining Priorities

The County uses a weighted objective scoring system for comparing project requests, CARs, DCRs, design projects and construction projects. The project ranking system complies with the mission, vision and objectives of the County. The scoring system was designed to follow the recommendations of the adopted Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan. In addition, staff may consider public comments, planning goals, unique opportunities and other non-numeric factors.

## Commitment to Programmed Projects

The TIP is based on a commitment to deliver the right transportation project at the right time, and at the right cost. Subject to BOS approval, new projects are added to the TIP annually, usually in the fifth year of the program. Projects already in the program are reviewed each year to see if they are qualified to progress to the next TIP phase, i.e. from DCR to design and from design to construction. MCDOT is committed to expediting projects through the entire process. A project may be accelerated, delayed, or occasionally deleted from the TIP as dictated by MCDOT's analysis, objectives, and/or budget constraints.



# TIP Programming (continued)

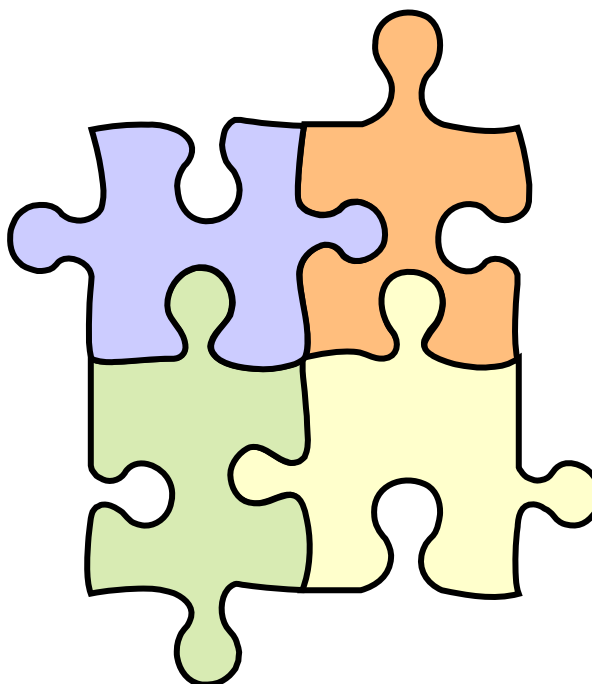
## TIP Selection Process

New TIP projects are evaluated using the criteria listed in the box below. Throughout the year, MCDOT ranks initial project requests for consideration to conduct CARs. MCDOT staff then annually reviews all completed CARs, DCRs, or designed projects to determine if they should proceed to the next phase. After several years if the project doesn't progress it may need to be updated and resubmitted by the applicant.

Specific criteria used in scoring and ranking TIP projects:

- 25 points: Safety, accident rate, accident severity cost, roadway configuration and pavement condition.
- 20 points: Current and future traffic congestion.
- 20 points: Benefit/cost ratio (must be above 1.0 to receive points).
- 20 points: Joint sponsorship includes the financial commitment to the project by another local government agency, who programs and budgets the project in their TIP.
- 15 points: Compliance with the County's Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan, percent of regional travel on the roadway and environmental factors.
- 5 points: Bonus points for including intelligent transportation system, pedestrian, bikeway, transit and environmental elements.

**Figure 2. MCDOT TIP Scoring System**



Projects may be accelerated as favorable conditions arise, such as additional or new funding received, increased revenue, grants or partnerships, significantly altered transportation needs, emergencies, cooperation with other jurisdictions, changing land use patterns and the recreational needs of parks and relocated facilities.

Factors that might cause a project to be rescheduled or deleted from the TIP include significantly altered transportation needs, project costs exceeding the benefits to the traveling public, emergencies or other developments which may alter traffic patterns, right-of-way considerations, issues surrounding agreements between principal jurisdictions, environmental or archaeological factors that influence the final design.